

AMERICAN TROOPS AND THE WAR
IN IRAQ

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, in a little over a month, this body will receive an official status report from General David Petraeus, the commander of American forces in Iraq, on whether benchmarks of progress set by Congress have been met. A preliminary report issued in July indicated that there has been a failure to meet more than half of those benchmarks, a woeful assessment that has been only further hampered by increased political fracturing in Baghdad. Earlier this week, the largest Sunni political bloc resigned from the Prime Minister's cabinet. Any hope that the political cohesion so desperately needed for real, permanent success in Iraq seems to be lost amid the destruction and divisiveness that continues to impede our efforts.

When we return in September, we will consider whether to continue granting unchecked and unqualified funding for this war—a war that has raged on for 4 long years, a war that has claimed thousands of American and Iraqi lives, a war that has cost nearly half a trillion dollars. And while we debate funding for Iraq, the day-to-day lives of the men and women in uniform deployed are consumed by more violence and uncertainty. Recently, we received news in New Mexico that the life of another of our soldiers has been lost to combat. Like my colleagues, the calls back home to console parents, spouses and children for their loss and the occurrence of somber funerals is more familiar than we ever thought it would be, and for all of us the end to this war cannot come soon enough.

When I return to New Mexico this month, I have no doubt that the war will continue to be the top issue on the minds of my constituents. We all hear the same question: What is Congress doing? I will tell them that we voted to redeploy our troops. That we voted to bring our soldiers home for longer periods of rest. And that we vote to enact key provisions and provide critical funding for the soldiers. However, in the end, the families in my district will want to know when the end will come, when their sons and daughters will be home.

We must bring our troops home, we must end this misguided and mismanaged war, and we must—we must—repair our foreign policy. For if we don't, in the decades to come the reverberations of our mistakes in Iraq will continue to affect our image and our position in the world. Change is needed, and it is needed now.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 791, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall No. 792, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall No. 793, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 794, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 795, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 796, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 797, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 798, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 799, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 800, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 801, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 802, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 803, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 804, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 805, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 806, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 807, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 808, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 809, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 810, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 811, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 812, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 813, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 814, I would have voted "nay."
On rollcall No. 815, I would have voted "yea."
On rollcall No. 816, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO CORNELL LEVERETT
MOORE

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, it is with great joy that I rise today to honor and congratulate Mr. Cornell Leverett Moore, the esteemed lawyer and activist from Minneapolis. Cornell recently received the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity in recognition of his exemplary ongoing service to the citizens of Minnesota and the United States. This great honor has doubtlessly found a worthy recipient in Cornell.

I first had the pleasure of meeting Cornell nearly 20 years ago, and he has then become a personal hero to me. I am to this day taken aback by his openness and his willingness to help. Cornell is admired by all of his colleagues, and I am personally blessed to have had such an outstanding teacher, such an involved mentor, and such a good friend for all of these years. In addition to being an outstanding member of the professional commu-

nity, Cornell has set an amazing example through his remarkable ability to make time for everybody in need of his help.

Cornell has nobly lent his efforts to countless civic organizations. He has served as the chairman of the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority—in addition to numerous other housing advocacy groups—fighting to ensure that low-income families have a place to call home. He sits on the board of trustees of many institutions of higher learning, including Howard University, where Cornell studied law. With a history of fighting for civil rights in Minnesota, Cornell is now working on increasing diversity within the ranks of Twin Cities-area law firms. He was also elected president of Sigma Pi Phi, the nation's oldest African-American fraternal organization, in its 100th year of existence.

Madam Speaker, a list of the ways in which Cornell has served his community, of his honors and awards, is far too long to detail in one attempt. I am happy to report that Cornell has shown no signs of slowing down his outstanding work. His receiving Kappa Alpha Psi's Distinguished Citizen Award should not be viewed simply in honor of the great things Cornell has already accomplished, but as a milestone. Madam Speaker, you can expect many more great things to come from my friend Cornell.

HONORING THE DEDICATED
SERVICE OF DAVID PLUNKETT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 3, 2007

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize David Plunkett for his outstanding service while working in my Washington, D.C., office. After 9 years of assisting me in serving the residents of Middle Tennessee, David is retiring from the Hill and moving on to other endeavors.

David's hard work, insight and meticulous work ethic while serving as my legislative director have helped me do my job better. His advice has been immensely helpful to me, and he has been an invaluable source of institutional knowledge for newer members of my staff.

While David's responsibilities have grown over the years, he has maintained his down-to-earth demeanor. He has always been willing to mentor new staff members and take a moment to give a thorough explanation to someone looking for greater understanding of a legislative concept.

The void David will leave is not only measured by his experience and knowledge, but also by his personality. His dry sense of humor and skill at playing the devil's advocate will be missed, and my staff and I know we will also miss the stories of his summer travel adventures with his wife, Vickie.

David, thank you for your hard work over the past 9 years. I wish you all the best in the future.